

# The Last Performance

By Thomas Hardy

"I am playing my oldest tunes," declared she,  
    "All the old tunes I know,—  
Those I learnt ever so long ago."  
—Why she should think just then she'd play them  
    Silence cloaks like snow.

When I returned from the town at nightfall  
    Notes continued to pour  
As when I had left two hours before:  
"It's the very last time," she said in closing;  
    "From now I play no more."

A few morns onward found her fading,  
    And, as her life outflew,  
I thought of her playing her tunes right through;  
And I felt she had known of what was coming,  
    And wondered how she knew.